

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 USIE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CPR-01 FBIE-00 INSE-00 VOE-00

EUR-12 SCA-01 /074 R

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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE

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USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR, CU

SUBJECT:RELAXED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON MEMBERS OF THE

CUBAN UN MISSION

1. THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PROVIDED THE DEPARTMENT'S
SPOKESMAN ON FEBRUARY 18:

Q: WHY DID THE U.S. PICK THIS MOMENT TO RELAX TRAVEL RES-
TRICTIONS ON MEMBERS OF THE CUBAN UN MISSION?

A: NO PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE READ INTO THE
TIMING. WE HAVE BEEN AWARE THAT THE CUBANS WERE DESIROUS
OF GREATER FREEDOM TO TRAVEL. WE HAVE HAD THE CHANGE UNDER
CONSIDERATION FOR SOME TIME ON THE BASIS THAT THE 25 MILE
RADIUS WAS PROBABLY TOO SEVERE.

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Q: DOES THIS SIGNIFY A CHANGE IN OUR CUBAN POLICY?

A: THIS IS CLEARLY A CHANGE IN PRACTICE BUT SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS EFFECTING OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH CUBA?

Q: WAS THIS MEANT AS A SIGNAL TO THE CUBANS?

A: THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT MAY SEE IT AS A GESTURE.

Q: WHEN WERE RESTRICTIONS TO 25 MILES FIRST APPLIED TO THE

CUBANS?

A: IN MARCH OF 1964.

Q: WAS THE DEPARTMENT FORCED TO TAKE THIS CURRENT STEP BY CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE?

A: ABSOLUTELY NOT.

Q: NOW THAT THE CUBAN MISSION MEMBERS CAN TRAVEL WITHIN A RADIUS OF 25 MILES THEY CAN VISIT WASHINGTON. DOES THIS MEAN THAT U.S. OFFICIALS WILL MEET WITH CUBANS FROM THE UN MISSION VISITING WASHINGTON?

A: THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR SUCH MEETINGS. WE PLAN TO CONTINUE TO CONDUCT ANY BUSINESS WE MAY HAVE WITH THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE SWISS EMBASSY IN HAVANA.

Q: WILL THE CUBANS HAVE TO TELL US WHEN THEY PLAN TO TRAVEL?

A: ONLY WITHIN CERTAIN AREAS WITHIN THE 250 MILE RADIUS. THE CUBANS MAY TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE 250 MILE RADIUS WITH THE WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

2. THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE ON THE SUBJECT OCCURRED AT THE BRIEFING:

Q: COULD YOU GIVE US WHAT YOU HAVE ON THE REMOVAL OF THE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON THE CUBAN DELEGATION AT THE UNITED UNCLASSIFIED

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NATIONS?

A: AS WE STATED YESTERDAY IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS, WE HAD MADE A DECISION TO PLACE THE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AS THEY APPLIED TO CUBA MORE IN LINE WITH THOSE THAT ARE APPLIED TO MOST OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES THAT HAVE DELEGATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

Q: WELL, WHEN WAS THE DECISION MADE?

A: I DON'T KNOW WHEN THE DECISION WAS MADE. THE NOTE
DELIVERED TO THE CUBAN MISSION THIS MORNING.

Q: WAS A COPY OF THE NOTE SENT TO HAVANA?

A: I DON'T BELIEVE SO. IT ONLY CONCERNED THE CUBAN
MISSION IN NEW YORK, SO IT WAS COMMUNICATED DIRECTLY TO IT.

Q: HAS THERE BEEN ANY COMMUNICATION WITH HAVANA IN
REFERENCE TO THIS MATTER?

A: NOT THAT I KNOW OF.

Q: DID YOU SAY THE SAME THING IS APPLIED TO MOST
COMMUNIST COUNTRIES?

A: MOST OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.

Q: WELL, WHAT OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES DO NOT HAVE THIS
PRIVILEGE? COULD YOU ADD IT ON THERE?

A: WHO DO NOT HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF --

Q: YES. THE ONES WHO ARE NOT AMONG THE MOST.(LAUGHTER.)

A: I TRIED TO GET A COMPLETE RUNDOWN ON THAT INFORMATION
YESTERDAY AND THIS MORNING, AND I DIDN'T HAVE IT WHEN I
CAME INTO THE BRIEFING. I HOPE TO HAVE IT SHORTLY IN THE
OFFICE -- COUNTRY BY COUNTRY, AND GROUP BY GROUP.

Q: DID YOU GET ANY RESPONSE FROM THE CUBANS WHEN THIS
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WAS DELIVERED?

A: NO.

Q: WHY WASN'T THE SAME POSITION MADE WITH REGARD TO OTHER
COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WITH WHOM WE HAVE NO RELATIONS?

A: I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION DIRECTLY. I WOULD SAY
THAT WE HAD BEEN AWARE THAT THE CUBANS WERE DESIROUS OR
WERE INTERESTED IN HAVING GREATER FREEDOM TO TRAVEL, AND
WE HAD THE CHANGE UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR SOME TIME AND --

Q: WHAT SPARKED THE DECISION NOW, BOB? WHY?

A: I CAN'T ANSWER THAT DIRECTLY, OTHER THAN TO GO BACK

AND SAY THAT WE DECIDED THAT WE WOULD PLACE THE RESTRICTIONS ON CUBA MORE IN LINE WITH THOSE OF MOST OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES RATHER THAN THE MORE RESTRICTIVE ONES THAT HAD APPLIED HERETOFORE.

Q: DOES THE DEPARTMENT STILL SAY THIS REPRESENTS NO CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD CUBA?

A: WELL, YES. I WOULD SAY THAT IT'S NOT A CHANGE IN OUR BASIC POLICY BUT, CLEARLY, IT'S A CHANGE IN PRACTICE.

Q: IS THIS IN RESPONSE, WOULD YOU SAY, TO THE SOMEWHAT SOFTENING IN TONE OF THE ANTI-AMERICAN RHETORIC BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT THAT WAS REFERRED TO IN THIS ROOM BY A

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL LAST WEEK?

A: WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHANGE IN TONE, BUT I WOULDN'T CHARACTERIZE THIS AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THAT OR ANY OTHER SPECIFIC ACTION BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT.

Q: BUT YOU WOULDN'T QUIBBLE WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT THIS IS A RESPONSE?

A: WELL, I THINK I'LL JUST REPEAT WHAT I SAID. I WOULD NOT SAY THIS WAS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO ANY ACTION BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. MAW
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